

Policies & Procedures Manual for the 2002 Series GED[®] Test on Computer (California Version)

Published by GED Testing Service

June 2012

Policies and Procedures Manual for the 2002 Series GED® Test on Computer

June 2012

Published by:

GED Testing Service LLC
1155 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Copyright © 2012 GED Testing Service LLC. All rights reserved.

Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

GED®, GED Testing Service®, ACE®, and American Council on Education® are registered trademarks of the American Council on Education (“ACE”). They may not be used or reproduced without the express written permission of ACE. The GED® and GED Testing Service® brands are administered by GED Testing Service LLC under license from the American Council on Education.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Preface | 4 |
| Section 1. GED® Test on Computer Program Policies | 8 |
| Section 2. GED® Testing Program Staff: Qualifications, Selection or Replacement, Training, and Responsibilities | 14 |
| Section 3. Process for Expanding the Jurisdiction's Testing Center Network..... | 19 |
| Section 4. Confidentiality of GED® Test Scores, and Criteria for Credentials | 21 |
| Section 5. Test-taker Eligibility, Registration and Scheduling to Take the GED® Test on Computer | 24 |
| Section 6. The Essay | 28 |
| Section 7. Editions and Features of the GED® Test on Computer | 30 |
| Section 8. Accommodated Testing of Test-takers with Disabilities | 32 |

Preface

Overview

Anyone involved in administering the GED® test on computer or any portion of the test is required to comply with and carry out the policies and procedures set forth in this *Policies and Procedures Manual* related to the delivery of the GED® test on computer.

Questions, comments, or suggestions concerning this *Policies and Procedures Manual* should be directed to GED® test operations at Operations@GEDtestingservice.com.

Adherence to these policies and procedures as established by GED Testing Service in concert with participating jurisdictions is vital to a successful GED® testing program.

GED Testing Service endorses and abides by the National Council on Measurement in Education's (NCME) Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement. GED Testing Service joins NCME in encouraging other organizations and individuals to uphold the principles of the NCME Code that are relevant to those aspects of their professions that relates to the GED® testing program. A copy of the NCME Code may be viewed on the Internet at www.natd.org/Code_of_Professional_Responsibilities.html

Statement of Purpose

The GED® test was developed by the American Council on Education (ACE) and is now maintained and delivered by GED Testing Service. The GED® test is normed using a national sample of graduating high school seniors. The GED® test is designed to provide adults, who have not graduated from high school, with an opportunity to earn their jurisdiction's high school-level educational diploma/certificate by measuring the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study.

History

The first GED® test was developed in 1942 to measure the major outcomes and concepts generally associated with four years of high school education. Initiated by the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI), the original tests were administered only to military personnel so that returning World War II veterans could more easily pursue their educational, vocational, and personal goals.

The USAFI examination staff, composed of civilian testing experts, worked with an advisory committee established with the support and cooperation of the American Council on Education, National Association of Secondary School Principals, and regional U.S. accrediting associations.

The opportunity to document the attainment of high school-level academic skills served

as a significant aid to the many service members whose academic careers had been disrupted during the war. During the 1950s, it became apparent that civilians could also benefit from the program—a need that ACE undertook to fulfill. Civilians were first allowed to take the GED® test in 1947. The Veterans' Testing Service administered the program from 1945 to 1963. In 1963, the Veterans' Testing Service changed its name to GED Testing Service in recognition that the program had become one chiefly for nonveteran adults offering an alternative path to earning a high school equivalency credential.

Since that time, GED Testing Service has directed a program that has served as many as one million Test-takers (as defined herein) annually. Testing is also provided for military personnel stationed overseas, people confined in correctional and health institutions, and for U.S. civilians and foreign nationals overseas.

The acceptance of the GED® test as a valid means of awarding a high school equivalency diploma/certificate is fundamental to the success of the GED® testing program. All 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, eight U.S. insular areas, ten Canadian provinces, and three Canadian territories use scores earned on the GED® test as a basis for awarding high school equivalency credentials. Recent national surveys confirm that most U.S. employers and training programs regard the GED® credential as equivalent to a traditional high school diploma. In addition, most U.S. colleges and universities accept reports of GED® test results as being the same as high school transcripts for admission purposes.

GED Testing Service Today

GED Testing Service became its own separate legal entity in March 2011 with the formal launch of a joint venture of the American Council on Education (ACE) and NCS Pearson, Inc. (Pearson). This joint venture, the combination of two industry-leading organizations, is designed to leverage common focus on adult education. GED Testing Service is committed to building a program to prepare and certify an adult learner's readiness to pursue a college degree, advanced vocational training, or a job that requires the skills of a high school graduate to perform.

As a function of the joint venture, GED Testing Service is exclusively authorized by ACE to license and oversee the administration of the GED® test and may impose restrictions and requirements regarding the use of the GED® test.

GED Testing Service's leadership and staff are comprised of professionals from both ACE and Pearson. Moreover, its board of directors is comprised of members appointed 50 percent by ACE and 50 percent by Pearson. The board of directors is charged with strategic and business oversight of the organization and ensuring the implementation and achievement of its mission, to ensure that more adults are career- and college-ready. Input and advice of GED Administrators™, adult educators and other stakeholders is received through their participation on ad hoc committees and working

groups established as needed by GED Testing Service. GED Testing Service is committed to providing adult learners an increased access and level of service to meet their educational needs and goals.

Forty million Americans don't have a high school diploma. The current GED® testing program reaches just two percent of this increasingly vulnerable population. Computer-based testing (CBT) provides these adults with increased and improved access to GED® testing, and to the only nationally recognized high school equivalency credential.

About the GED® Test on Computer

The primary goal of the CBT project is to modernize the GED® test distribution method, which will increase access and opportunities for adults to pursue and attain the nationally recognized GED® credential.

The current 2002 Series GED® Test will be delivered on computer—the same GED® test that is now offered on paper—until the end of 2013. Some jurisdictions may offer both paper- and computer-based testing through 2013. The GED® test on computer will be offered only at authorized testing centers and will not be available online. This manual describes the policies and procedures used to implement the GED® test on computer.

Scheduled for release in January 2014, the new GED® test will only be available on computer (except for special Test-taker accommodations). In the short term, this additional mode of delivery will help expand access and flexibility for Test-takers—especially since a double-digit testing increase is anticipated in 2013 with the 2002 Series GED® Test series ending and Test-taker partial scores expiring. GED Testing Service will work with each jurisdiction to determine how to best deliver GED® testing based on the needs of the local community. We are actively encouraging existing authorized Pearson VUE Testing Centers (PVTC) and existing paper-based test (PBT) centers to offer or convert to CBT centers in order to serve more Test-takers. Test-takers will not be able to combine paper and computer-based testing records for the 2002 series GED test. The jurisdiction must approve any change that allows test-takers to combine paper and computer-based testing records.

The GED® test on computer is available in U.S. English-language editions and Spanish-language editions. Canadian English-language and French-language editions will also be available when computer-based testing is implemented in Canada. Additional details about these additions and any related accommodations are referenced in later sections of this Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 1: GED® Test on Computer Program Policies

This *Policies and Procedures Manual* covers the policies and procedures related to the GED® test on computer for staff qualifications and responsibilities, test administration, Test-taker eligibility, accommodations for Test-takers with disabilities, and test security.

All involved with the testing program—including but not limited to GED Administrators™—must comply with all guidelines as set out in the *Brand Usage Guidelines for Licensed Jurisdictions and Other Licensed Users*. This document can be downloaded from the document library on GED AccessPoint™.

The following policies broadly define the expectations for the GED® testing program and all GED® testing program personnel.

POLICY: GED® testing programs shall be conducted in accordance with (1) all policies and procedures as developed by GED Testing Service contained in this manual; and, (2) policies and procedures established by the respective jurisdictional agency responsible for overseeing their jurisdictional program.

POLICY: It is the responsibility of the staff of GED Testing Service to review the existing procedures and policies at least annually and to recommend to GED Testing Service's executive vice president and/or its vice president of operations any changes and new policies, as needed or as required. It is also the responsibility of the GED Testing Service staff to interpret policies and to develop procedures for implementing them. GED Testing Service will discuss and correspond with the jurisdictional GED Administrator™ regarding suggested additions to these policies and procedures.

POLICY: Use of any GED® test, other than as described in the *Statement of Purpose*, is strictly prohibited without the express written permission from GED Testing Service. Written authorization to use the GED® test for any purpose not described in the *Statement of Purpose* must be obtained in advance from the GED Testing Service. Misuse of the GED® test includes but is not limited to: (1) use for the purposes of grade placement or promotion; (2) as measures of student progress in instructional programs; (3) use as a means of awarding academic credit (e.g. Carnegie units); or (4) use as a means of awarding alternative credentials to currently enrolled high school students. The exception to this is for jurisdictions approved by GED Testing Service to operate the GED Option™ program. Jurisdictions approved to operate the GED® Option™ program shall test students in accordance with their approved GED Option™ program plan.

POLICY: GED® and GED Testing Service® are registered trademarks of the American Council on Education (ACE). As the exclusive licensee of these marks, GED Testing Service administers the GED® brand and related trademarks on behalf of ACE. The jurisdiction's use of these registered trademarks must be in

accordance with GED® Brand Usage Guidelines for Licensed Jurisdictions and other Licensed Users, which are posted on GED Testing Service's website and which may be updated from time to time.

POLICY REGARDING RIGHTS TO GED® TEST, TEST CONTENT, GED® TEST SCORES AND TEST-TAKER DATA: GED Testing Service is the exclusive owner of the GED® test, including all test questions and essay prompts. Use of any GED® test (in whole or in part), essay prompts or essays is prohibited without the express written permission of GED Testing Service LLC. The GED® test questions and essay prompts administered at testing centers are the valuable, copyrighted property of GED Testing Service.

The term "Test-taker" when used herein, means any individual who registers, prepares for, or takes any test supplied or owned by GED Testing Service. As a condition of testing, a Test-taker agrees to:

- Maintain the confidentiality of all test questions and essay prompts administered to him/her
- Not receive any unauthorized assistance while taking the GED® test
- Not discuss specific test items or essay prompts with anyone other than the test administrator/test site manager
- Return all testing items to the test administrator/test site manager at the conclusion of testing

The GED® test is not the property of the Test-taker. A disclosure of GED® test questions in any form by any means in violation of this policy undermines the integrity and security of the GED® test and is strictly prohibited. Any unauthorized access, reproduction, distribution or disclosure of GED® test questions by a Test-taker before, during, or after taking the GED® test may be a violation of U.S. and international intellectual property laws and treaties. Available remedies will be pursued by GED Testing Service as appropriate, which may include criminal prosecution, a civil lawsuit seeking damages, and/or canceling or invalidating the Test-taker's test scores and notifying entities that have received the Test-taker's test scores.

"Test-taker Data" means all data, responses, essays and answers provided or authored by a Test-taker including, but not limited to a Test-taker's demographic and performance data, Test-taker's credential status, expiration dates, effective dates, all test results, test scores, information related to accommodation requests, GED Option™ program information, all other data related to the testing process, other data about a Test-taker interactions with jurisdiction credentialing activity, and data that is a subset of the Test-taker's Data.

GED Testing Service and the Test-taker's Jurisdiction may use Test-taker Data in any reasonable manner or in a manner in which the Test-taker has provided consent to use such Test-taker Data.

The Jurisdiction's reasonable use includes purposes of evaluating and reporting on the performance of the jurisdiction's Test-taker, assessing whether the Test-taker qualifies for the jurisdiction's high school-equivalency credential or GED® credential, or for reporting aggregated data regarding the jurisdiction's GED® testing program. GED Testing Service will work with the jurisdiction regarding aggregate data for reports and other research as the parties mutually agree. When the CBT interface is fully operational the jurisdiction will have a log on ID to access the GED Testing Service system to view and monitor Test-taker Data and test scores for their jurisdiction.

POLICY ON PRIVACY: GED Testing Service recognizes the privacy interests of Test-takers. GED Testing Service is committed to respecting that privacy and keeping Test-takers informed about GED Testing Service data privacy policies. GED Testing Service has established safeguards to help prevent unauthorized access to or misuse of the Test-taker's Data maintained by GED Testing Service, but cannot guarantee that Test-taker's Data will never be disclosed in a manner inconsistent with this data privacy policy (for example, as a result of unauthorized acts by parties that violate applicable law or relevant web policies).

Except as set forth below, Test-taker Data may not be made available to third parties without the Test-taker's permission.

- 1. Research.** GED Testing Service and third parties authorized by GED Testing Service may access and use Test-taker Data for research purposes, including research directed toward improving or reporting on the effectiveness of the GED® testing program. Any such access to Test-taker Data will be subject to a confidentiality requirement that prohibits the disclosure or publication of any information that allows individual Test-takers to be identified. Unless a Test-taker has indicated otherwise on the demographics form, GED Testing Service may contact a Test-taker to determine whether he or she is willing to participate in surveys that are also intended to improve or report on the effectiveness of the GED® testing program.
- 2. Legal Proceedings.** GED Testing Service may disclose and provide access to Test-taker Data in response to a subpoena or other order in a judicial or other governmental proceeding, or as otherwise required by law. To ensure test security, GED Testing Service may also disclose and provide access to personally identifiable information in order to detect, investigate, or prevent fraud or other unlawful activity or violations of GED Testing Service testing policies.
- 3. Third Parties.** A number of third parties perform services relating to the GED® testing program. These third parties provide GED Testing Service with information from or about Test-takers collected on forms that are prepared by GED Testing Service, or on modified versions of those forms. The information includes, but is not limited to, Test-taker demographic details, test scores, accommodation requests, and GED Option™ program testing authorizations. The GED Testing Service also manages this information, as it is reflected in the GED Testing Service records.

GED Testing Service reserves the right to update, change, and amend such policies at any time.

Section 2: GED® Testing Program Staff: Qualifications, Selection or Replacement, Training, and Responsibilities

Overview

The chief administrative officer at each respective jurisdiction designates a GED Administrator™ who is directly responsible for the operation, management, and secure administration of the GED® testing program in cooperation with authorized PVTs throughout the jurisdiction.

2.1 Qualifications of the GED Administrator™

POLICY: Chief administrative officer of state, provincial, or territorial agencies participating in the testing program shall appoint a qualified individual to administer and oversee all aspects of GED® testing in his/her respective jurisdiction.

New GED Administrators™ are professional and experienced educators who must hold a master's degree and have experience in adult education, educational administration, testing, or counseling, and who must be knowledgeable about the GED® testing program or educational testing and measurement.

GED Administrators™ should be full-time employees charged with responsibility for the GED® testing program.

If a jurisdiction wishes to appoint an administrator who does not have a master's degree, the request for waiver should be addressed to the director of computer testing operations (Operations@GEDtestingservice.com).

2.2 Selection or Replacement of the GED Administrator™

The GED Administrator™ is a jurisdiction's authorized liaison with GED Testing Service. The chief administrative officer of the participating jurisdictional agency shall formally notify GED Testing Service of the appointment and the effective appointment date of the GED Administrator™ using the Administrator Appointment form, which can be requested from the GED® test operations (Operations@GEDtestingservice.com).

When it becomes necessary to appoint a temporary or acting GED Administrator™, the jurisdiction must notify GED Testing Service promptly, including the expected length of time of the temporary or acting appointment.

2.3 Training the GED Administrator™

New GED Administrators™ will receive training from GED Testing Service. Training will begin within four weeks of GED Testing Service's notification of the appointment.

2.4 Responsibilities of the GED Administrator™

The GED Administrator™ is responsible for policy implementation and administration of the program within the jurisdiction. The GED Administrator™ is the person with whom GED Testing Service has regular and direct contact regarding policies, procedures, and issues. GED Testing Service consults with the GED Administrator™ to ensure the GED® testing program conforms with GED Testing Service's policies and procedures, as well as to any jurisdictional or local requirements.

2.5 Testing Center Staff

POLICY: Persons instructing potential Test-takers for the GED® test, particularly as teachers in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Literacy, GED® test instruction, secondary education programs, adult secondary education programs, alternative high school education programs, and developmental education staff are prohibited from becoming a test administrator or site manager.

3.2 Computer-Based Testing Center Requirements

To become a GED Testing Service computer based test center the test center must:

- a. Meet all requirements to become an authorized PVTC, including signing an agreement with Pearson VUE.
- b. Remain in good standing with Pearson VUE.
- c. Maintain full compliance with all GED Testing Service and Pearson VUE policies and procedures for the PVTC.

3.3 Test Administrator Qualifications and Staffing

- a. Test administrators must meet all Pearson VUE test administrator requirements.
- b. Test administrators are required to pass the Pearson VUE Administrator Certification Exam to become a test administrator and recertify each year.
- c. No one directly involved in GED[®] instruction, secondary education program staff, adult secondary program staff, adult basic education, adult literacy, alternative high school education program staff and developmental education staff can serve as a test administrator in a PVTC.

Section 4: Confidentiality of GED® Test Scores and Criteria for GED® Credentials

Protecting the confidentiality of the scores received by Test-takers is critical to the overall management of the GED® testing program. GED Administrator™ must ensure that all jurisdictional staff take appropriate measures to protect data of individual Test-takers.

Unlike school records to which members of the teaching staff have access, scores earned on the GED® test by individual Test-takers are confidential. All jurisdiction departments or ministries of education, or other approved jurisdictional agencies are permitted to report an individual's scores only with the written permission of this Test-taker or legal guardian as applicable. Requests transmitted by fax machine may be used judiciously to expedite transmission of such information.

A GED® diploma or credential, whether issued by the department or ministry of education or other approved jurisdictional agency, GED Testing Service or by a local school, should be considered in the same manner as a traditional high school diploma. However, because some Test-takers do not wish their credential awards to be a matter of public record, no name of a credential recipient should be released unless an individual Test-taker has signed written permission to this effect. The fact that a person has or has not taken the GED® test should also be treated as confidential information.

4.1 Criteria for Issuing a High School Credential Based on Results of the GED® test

The GED® test is normed and standardized using graduating high school seniors. A passing standard is set based upon the results of the norming studies. A minimum score on individual tests and a minimum battery average score across all five content areas are required. Only 60 percent of the graduating high school seniors involved in the norming studies were able to meet the passing standard set by GED Testing Service. GED Testing Service recommends that state, provincial, or territorial departments of education or other approved jurisdictional agencies issue a high school credential to eligible persons on the basis of meeting the passing standard on the GED® test.

POLICY: To meet the passing standard on the GED® test, a Test-taker must earn a total score of 2,250 or higher on all five content areas with no individual test score below 410. In issuing high school credentials, jurisdictions are permitted to require higher passing score standards, but not lower than those set by GED Testing Service. Test-takers must meet the passing standards that apply at the time of battery completion.

POLICY: Combination of Scores across GED® Test Series: All Test-takers who

begin testing on the 2002 Series GED® Test must successfully complete the entire battery of the 2002 Series GED® Test. Individual passing test scores earned on GED® test from earlier series—the 1942 series, 1978 series, or 1988 series—are not compatible with scores from the 2002 series.

Any Test-taker who begins testing on the 2002 Series GED® Test must complete testing and be granted the credential with the 2002 Series GED® Test if passing scores are earned. Those who do not complete must begin over and take all tests in the new series in order to earn a credential.

POLICY: Expiration of partial scores within the test series: GED Testing Service allows scores to stand across the total time period that one test series is in use. Jurisdictions may decide to impose time limits that do not extend the full test series. Specific provisions (i.e. length of time between testing events; how long partial scores are maintained) for re-testing are established by the jurisdiction and are not limited to the minimum length of time that shall elapse between testing and the type of additional study (if any) required before re-testing.

POLICY: The minimum test score requirements and other qualifications required for Test-takers who take the English-language editions of the GED® test shall also be used for Test-takers who take the French-language, Spanish-language, and accommodated editions of the tests.

Official GED® test scores must be reported on the GED® official transcript of GED® test results (2002 Series Form 30) or a copy-safe form reporting the exact information as Form 30 and approved by GED Testing Service.

4.2 Official Transcripts of GED® Test Results

POLICY: Reports of scores achieved on the GED® test are official only when reported by the department or ministry of education, approved jurisdictional agency, or GED Testing Service. Reports from all of the above shall be accepted by all participating jurisdictions.

4.2-1 Format of the Official Transcript of GED® Test Results (Score Report)

The official transcript must contain all the information presented on both sides of the official transcript of GED® test results (2002 Series Form 30) and must be printed on copy-safe paper, which, when copied, identifies the copy as a copy, not as an original. Jurisdictions may revise the layout of the information and may add information such as jurisdictional requirements.

Under no circumstances may a Test-taker's raw score or a Test-taker's essay score be reported on the official transcript of GED® test results or other official jurisdictional

transcript.

Section 5: Eligibility, Registration, and Scheduling to Take the GED® Test on Computer

Overview

An important element in maintaining the integrity and security of the GED® testing program is proper identification of Test-takers and the determination of their eligibility to be administered the GED® test.

5.1 Eligibility for the GED® Test

POLICY: The GED® test may be administered to eligible Test-takers only. The following minimum guidelines must be met:

- a. Individuals must be at least 16 years old and not currently enrolled in an accredited high school, including those accredited by regional accrediting bodies and also those approved by the jurisdiction's department or ministry of education.¹
- b. If an individual is under 18 years old, the individual's registration shall be reviewed to determine eligibility to test and shall: (i) collect any jurisdiction required eligibility documentation including a signed parent/guardian consent for GED Testing Service and (iii) approve or disapprove the individual's eligibility to take the GED® test.
- c. Only persons who do not hold a standard high school diploma are eligible to take the GED® test.²
- d. Under no circumstances may the GED® test be administered to persons less than 16 years of age.
- e. GED Testing Service LLC shall ensure that the GED® test is available to any qualified adult in accordance with jurisdictional rules, regulations, and/or code.
- f. Persons whose high school diploma is from an unaccredited high school or high school program not recognized by their jurisdiction's department of education, or who have a secondary school diploma from countries outside of the United States and Canada, are eligible to take the GED® test if they meet all other necessary eligibility and identity requirements.
- g. Any jurisdictional rules pertaining to pre- or post-testing (including credentialing) must remain in effect through December 31, 2013.

¹ The only allowable exception to this policy is for states that are approved by GED Testing Service to operate the GED Option™ program, and only then shall they test students in accordance with their approved GED Option™ program plan.

² Persons who have been awarded a high school equivalency diploma or other non-standard high school diploma are eligible to take the GED® test.

The GED Administrator™ shall provide all registration eligibility requirements to GED Testing Service.

5.1-1 Testing of Non-citizens

Non-citizens, including refugees, legal and illegal immigrants, resident and nonresident aliens, and other foreign nationals, are eligible to take the GED® test in the opinion of GED Testing Service if they meet all of the eligibility and identification GED Testing Service and jurisdictional requirements described herein.

5.1-2 Special Exceptions for Loss of Permanent Records

In certain circumstances, permanent high school records may have been lost or destroyed as the result of a school closure or a disaster such as war, fire, flood, earthquake, tornado, or hurricane. In such cases, an official high school transcript indicating high school completion may not be available. Under these circumstances, a person remains eligible to take the GED® test.

5.1-3 Diplomas from Unaccredited High Schools

Persons whose high school diplomas are from unaccredited high schools or high school programs not recognized by their jurisdiction's department of education, or who have secondary school diplomas from countries outside the United States and Canada, are eligible to take the GED® test if they meet all other necessary eligibility and identity requirements.

5.2 Verification of Identity

Verification of each Test-taker's identity for testing is critical to maintaining the security and integrity of the GED® testing program. Each Test-taker tested must be eligible to take the GED® test and each Test-taker must prove his/her identity. Identity and age will be verified using acceptable photo ID.

Valid driver's licenses, valid passports, military IDs, or other forms of government-issued (national or foreign) identification that show name, address, date of birth, signature, and photograph are all acceptable forms of identification, unless there is any reason to question their authenticity. Outdated identification or identification suspected of being forged shall not be accepted. Current identification provided by a postsecondary educational institution is also acceptable, provided it contains the Test-taker's name, address, date of birth, signature, and photograph.

If one form of identification does not meet all of GED Testing Service requirements, the jurisdictional GED Administrator™ and GED Testing Service may approve an appropriate combination of other documents to satisfy the identity requirements.

5.3 Confirmation of Eligibility

Test-takers must sign a certification attesting to their identity and agreement to the Test-takers/candidate rules when they sign into the PVTC.

5.4 Policy for Re-testing

POLICY: In order to achieve a passing score, Test-takers shall be permitted to re-test on the entire battery or on certain test(s) in the battery in accordance with the following:

- a. Test-takers may test only once per form of any individual test in a year (January 1 to December 31).
- b. Some test editions are available in only two forms a year. If Test-takers need to repeat a form for a third attempt, they must first take the alternate form. There is a 90-day waiting period before re-administering a repeat form.

Under certain circumstances as listed below and agreed to by GED Testing Service, Test-takers who have earned passing scores on the GED® test and who have earned their jurisdiction's high school-equivalency credential may re-test. Individuals that have earned their jurisdiction's high school-equivalency credential but who need to earn higher GED® test scores to meet an admission requirement for postsecondary education or training, to meet employment requirements, or to enlist in the armed forces are eligible to retake the GED® test. Similarly, GED® graduates who have earned a credential based on passing the French- or Spanish-language edition of the tests and need to pass the English- language edition to qualify for postsecondary education or training, employment, or enlistment into the armed forces are also eligible to retake the GED® test. For either re-testing exception described previously, satisfactory documentation must be provided to the test administrator prior to re-testing.

GED Administrator™ or their designee has a responsibility to advise all Test-takers on all issues related to re-testing.

5.5 Rescheduling and Canceling a GED® test on Computer

- a. Test-takers must reschedule and cancel their GED® test appointment at least 48 hours before the appointment time via the Test-taker website, Call Center, or the PVTC. Appointments must be rescheduled within the authorized delivery period.
- b. No additional fee will be charged to the Test-taker for rescheduling or canceling, if rescheduling or canceling is done at least 48 hours before the appointment time.
- c. Test-takers cannot reschedule an appointment inside of this 48-hour notice time.

- d. Test-takers that do not report to their scheduled appointment time are considered no-shows and will forfeit their test fees.
- e. The GED Administrator™ or their designee has a responsibility to advise all Test-takers on all issues related to re-testing.
- f. Test-takers that cancel an appointment at least 48 hours prior to their appointment time and do not wish to reschedule will receive 100 percent of the test fee refunded.
- g. Test-takers that arrive more than 15 minutes late may lose their ability to take the GED® test at the scheduled time and may forfeit their test fee.
- h. All registrations with accommodations must be rescheduled or canceled through the GED Testing Service accommodations coordinator.

5.6 Transferring Test-Taker Transcript

If a Test-taker requests a transfer of his/her transcript from one jurisdiction to another, the GED Administrator™ of the Test-taker's original jurisdiction shall obtain the Test-taker's written consent, including, if the Test-taker is under 18 years old, the Test-taker's parental/guardian's consent, which signed consent must specify the records the Test-taker is requesting transferred, the purpose of the disclosure and the identification of the party to whom the disclosure of the record may be made.

Section 6: The Essay

Overview

Test-takers write an original essay on an assigned topic. Part II of the Language Arts, Writing Test directly measures a dimension of writing skills not tested by the multiple-choice questions.

6.1 Essay Topics

The essay topics present issues or situations of general interest about which adults would be expected to have some knowledge. The topics are brief and written at an appropriate reading level. In general, the topics direct Test-takers to state their views and to support them with examples from their own lives or the lives of others. Topics that require a specific format, such as the argumentative or comparison/contrast essay, are avoided so that Test-takers with less formal training in writing are not penalized.

In rare cases, an alternative essay topic will be used in those circumstances where a Test-taker is unable to write about an assigned essay topic because the topic is inappropriate due to the Test-taker's disability, religion, or incarceration. For example, an Amish Test-taker may be asked to write about a modern technological device. Many Amish sects prohibit members from using advanced technology, so the Test-taker's knowledge of the subject may be so limited as to diminish the opportunity to demonstrate his or her writing skills.

Because of the potential for abuse of this policy, the GED Administrator™ will also monitor patterns and numbers of objections.

At GED Testing Service, the operations director will also monitor objections.

6.2 Essay Score

Neither the individual essay score nor the multiple choice score may be separately provided to any Test-taker. The score from the Language Arts, Writing Test is a combination of the two parts.

6.2-1 Security of Essay Prompts and Topics

POLICY: To maintain security of the topics, GED Testing Service policy prohibits discussing or publicizing the topic or content of any essay or returning or giving any essay to a Test-taker, his/her family, or anyone else. The essay must be treated as secure, confidential material, except in the limited circumstances in which GED Testing Service may authorize a disclosure.

Test-takers are advised of this policy when they take the Language Arts, Writing Test. It is posted on the bottom of the page titled “Essay Directions and Topic:”

“IMPORTANT: The copy of the essay that you take is the property of the GED Testing Service and is confidential and secure. GED Testing Service policy prohibits the return of the essay to you, your family, or any other individual or program. The policy further prohibits you from discussing or publicizing the content of your essay.”

Section 7: Editions and Features of the GED® Test on Computer

Overview

GED Testing Service has developed several forms of the GED® test on computer to meet the needs of Test-takers who are not able to use the standard English-language edition of the tests.

7.1 Editions in a Language Other than English³

French-language and Spanish-language editions of the GED® test on computer are in development and will be available at a future date.

Normal time limits for the Spanish- and French-language editions have been set as follows:

| | Spanish/French | English |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Language Arts, Writing | 125 minutes | 120 minutes |
| Language Arts, Reading | 70 minutes | 65 minutes |
| Social Studies | 75 minutes | 70 minutes |
| Science | 85 minutes | 80 minutes |
| Math | Part I: 50 | Part I: 45 minutes |
| minutes | Part II: 50 minutes | Part II: 45 minutes |

³Only two forms each of the French- and Spanish-language editions are released each year. Individuals taking either of these editions have three opportunities to take the tests in order to pass. This means that it may be necessary for an individual to repeat a form on which he or she previously tested. Before repeating a form, the individual must first take the alternate form of the test. Whenever it is necessary to administer a repeat form of the tests, there is a 90-day wait period before re-administering a repeat form.

7.1-1 Combining 2002 Series GED® Test Scores Across Different Language Formats

Determining whether to combine scores across different language formats (English, Spanish, and French) of the GED® test is a matter for the jurisdictions to decide. Jurisdictions should consider the following:

- The available forms of the Spanish-language GED® test are direct translations of the same forms of the U.S. English-language GED® test, with the exception of the Language Arts, Writing Test.
- The available forms of the French-language GED® test are direct translations of the same forms of the Canadian English-language GED® test, with the exception of the Language Arts, Writing and Language Arts, Reading Tests.

7.1-2 Combining 2002 Series GED® Test Scores Across U.S. and Canadian English-Language Versions

In the U.S. and Canadian English-language versions of the GED® test, the content of the Social Studies Test is specific to the country in which the test is administered. For example, approximately 50 percent of the Canadian English-language version of the Social Studies Test is specific to Canadian history, government, and civics. Because of this difference between the tests, GED Testing Service recommends that scores across U.S. and Canadian versions be combined only if the Test-taker takes the Social Studies Test in the country from which he or she wishes to earn a credential. That is, if a Test-taker wishes to earn a credential in the United States, he or she should take the U.S. version of the Social Studies Test; if a Test-taker wishes to earn a credential in Canada, he or she should take the Canadian version of the Social Studies Test.

Section 8: Accommodated Testing of Test-takers with Disabilities

The following guidance is always superseded by the guidelines described in the materials posted on the GED Testing Service's website at www.gedtestingservice.com/accommodations; the website always includes the most up-to-date information and guidelines.

Overview

Reasonable accommodations are provided for Test-takers who have documented disabilities that prevent them from accessing the GED[®] test. GED Testing Service endeavors to comply with federal and applicable state law providing protection to the disabled, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended ("ADAAA"), and its implementing regulations.

8.1 GED[®] Test for Test-takers with Disabilities

In an effort to make the GED[®] test accessible to all applicants, accommodations are made for Test-takers who have physical, mental, sensory, or cognitive disabilities and who provide appropriate documentation from a qualified professional of their impairment and its effect on their ability to take the GED[®] test under standard conditions.

POLICY: Official GED[®] testing centers shall provide appropriate accommodations for Test-takers with documented disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) and the Canadian Charter on Rights and Freedoms.

GED[®] testing centers must offer the examinations in a place and manner that are accessible to persons with documented disabilities, as approved by jurisdictional administrators or the GED Testing Service. This may require modifications to the manner in which the GED[®] test is administered, such as extended testing time, as well as appropriate auxiliary aids and services.

When disabilities are properly documented using the applicable GED Testing Service Request for Testing Accommodations form, and when accommodations are approved by GED Testing Service, GED Testing Service will arrange to test the Test-taker using the approved accommodations. The additional costs, if any, associated with providing such services may not be charged to the Test-taker. Fairness to all Test-takers is the underlying principle of the accommodations procedure, both for those Test-takers who test with approved accommodations and those Test-takers who test without accommodations.

GED Administrators™ may not approve accommodations for Test-takers who request accommodations for the computer-based GED® test. GED Testing Service will review and decide-upon all such requests.

8.2 Requests for Accommodations

Test-takers may request accommodations at any time. However, it is strongly recommended that they do so at least 60 days in advance of their desired test date to allow sufficient time to review all documentation that has been submitted and for arrangements to be made for the accommodation(s). In addition, because many accommodations requests that are received are **incomplete**, this leaves sufficient time for the Test-taker to gather additional supporting documentation prior to their desired test date.

The documentation ordinarily should be generated by a professional qualified to diagnose and assess the disability affecting the Test-taker and how it impacts the Test-taker's ability to take the GED® test. The documentation must confirm that the Test-taker has a disability which substantially limits a major life activity, such as seeing, hearing, learning (in general), or physical movement, and must demonstrate how the disability affects the Test-taker's ability to take the GED® test under standard conditions. **The documentation must demonstrate not only that the person meets diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder, but also that the condition rises to the level of a *disability* as defined by the ADA.**

If the Test-taker, qualified professional or other person believes that a Test-taker needs an accommodation that is not listed in this manual and that it is not explicitly prohibited, the GED Testing Service should be contacted for guidance.

POLICY: A Test-taker's request for accommodated testing and supporting documentation shall be held in confidence. No record of accommodated testing is permitted on a report of a Test-taker's GED® test results or GED® credential.

When Test-takers register online for the GED® test on computer, the following process occurs:

- a. The Test-taker will register online for the GED® test on computer. During the registration process, the Test-taker will be queried about the need for accommodations. If the Test-taker affirms this need:
 - i. The Test-taker will be directed to the GED Testing Service accommodations website (www.gedtestingservice.com/accommodations) for instructions regarding applying for accommodations.
 - ii. The Test-taker will be told that scheduling of an accommodated seat cannot

take place until the accommodations approval process has been completed.

- iii. The Test-taker will be told to expect up to 30 days (in most cases) for review of the accommodations request.

- b. The Test-taker will follow the steps for applying for accommodations, as outlined on the website specified above, including completing the *Accommodations Request Form* and gathering supporting documentation.
- c. The Test-taker will submit the Accommodations Request Form and supporting documentation to the GED Chief Examiner™ at his/her local GED Testing Center.
- d. GED Testing Service will review the Test-taker's submittal and make the accommodations determination.
- e. If GED Testing Service needs additional information pertaining to the Test-taker's accommodation request, the Test-taker will be contacted for this purpose.
- f. GED Testing Service will render a decision in most cases within 30 days. The decision will be entered into GED Accesspoint™, as has been our process. The decision will also be entered into Credential Manager (used by Pearson VUE).
- g. The Credential Manager system will send the Test-taker an email indicating that a decision regarding accommodations has been made, and instruct Test-taker to call the accommodations customer service representative for information about this decision and further instructions.
- h. Test-taker calls the accommodations customer service representative and reviews accommodations decision. Accommodations customer service representative answers any questions Test-taker may have about the accommodations decision, and notifies the Test-taker of the Appeal process (if applicable).
- i. Accommodations customer service representative forwards the Test-taker to the Pearson VUE accommodations scheduling department to schedule the accommodated seat.
- j. Credential Manager sends the Test-taker a follow-up email that outlines the specific accommodations decision.
- k. At the GED® test center, a test administrator reviews the Test-taker's registration and scheduling information on the test registration system and will administer the GED® test in accordance with the approved accommodation instructions.

8.3 Required Documentation for Disabilities

8.3-1 Appropriate Documentation That Must Be Provided

The specific documentation that must be provided is described in detail in the *Documentation Guidelines*, posted at www.gedtestingservice.com/accommodations. There are *Documentation Guidelines for Candidates*. Test-takers are strongly encouraged to read these prior to submitting a request for test accommodations. In addition, there are *Documentation Guidelines for Evaluators* (one for each disability type). Test-takers **are encouraged to provide the documentation guidelines to their evaluators, preferably**

prior to the start of the evaluation itself.

8.3-2 Professional Diagnosticians

The administration of diagnostic assessments, determination of specific diagnoses, and recommendation of appropriate accommodations must be made by a qualified professional diagnostician whose credentials are appropriate to the disability. Specific guidelines regarding the qualifications of evaluators can be found in the *Documentation Guidelines*, posted on the website.

8.3-3 Recommendation for Accommodated Testing

The diagnostic report must include specific recommendations for the accommodation(s). Note that Test-takers are not automatically entitled to their requested accommodations. Moreover, a particular auxiliary aid or other accommodation should not be provided if it would fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge that the GED® test is intended to test, or would jeopardize either test security or validity of scores.

8.4 Accommodations for GED® Test-Takers Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments

There are a number of testing alternatives for Test-takers who are blind or who have visual impairments that hamper access to the GED® test. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Use of the Braille GED® test
- b. Use of the paper-based large-print GED® test
- c. Use of a handheld magnifier
- d. Use of a video magnifier for enlarging the paper test
- e. Use of an audiocassette for audio presentation of the paper-based test
- f. Use of a scribe for dictating responses
- g. Use of a human reader in conjunction with the GED® test on computer
- h. Screen magnification of the GED® test on computer
- i. Use of a screen overlay for the GED® test on computer
- j. Use of a talking calculator

In unusual situations, more individualized accommodations can be arranged, but this may require more than the standard 30 days to review and prepare for such accommodations.

8.5 Accommodations for Test-takers Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Because the GED® test are written (not oral), there are minimal requirements for most Test-takers who are deaf or hard of hearing. **In no situation may the GED® test be translated or interpreted into any other language, such as ASL, which would**

fundamentally alter the nature of the test.

If a Test-taker is deaf or hard of hearing, the following adaptations may be approved, either singly or in combination:

- a. For the paper-based GED® test, a signed, captioned DVD video-recording of GED® test instructions is available for deaf Test-takers to use.
- b. Instead of listening to the test administrator or proctor say the instructions aloud (prior to the start of the test), the test administrator may provide the instructions to the Test-taker in written form.

8.6 Accommodations for Test-takers Who Have ADHD

Test-takers who have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (with or without hyperactivity/impulsivity; “ADHD”) may request testing accommodations. In order to be approved, a Test-taker with ADHD (like any other disorder) must not only demonstrate that diagnostic criteria for the disorder have been met, through appropriate documentation, but also that the disorder rises to the level of a *disability* as defined by applicable federal law. That is, the Test-taker must provide evidence that they are substantially limited in a major life activity, not merely that they have symptoms of inattention or distractibility.

After a Test-taker provides evidence that they are *disabled* as defined by law, the Test-taker must show that the requested accommodations are reasonable and necessary in order to provide access to the GED® test. Test-takers with ADHD may benefit most from extra “refocusing” breaks, which are supervised, and/or testing in a private or distraction-reduced room. In most cases, for Test-takers who have trouble sustaining their attention over time, and/or for whom attention begins to wane over time, the use of extended testing time is contraindicated. That is, Test-takers who have trouble sustaining their attention over time, and their evaluators, should carefully consider the logic of any request to dramatically lengthen the seat time.

8.7 Use of a Scribe to Record Answers on the GED® Test

A scribe (“recorder”) records the answers to multiple-choice questions and/or the essay as dictated by the Test-taker. This includes entering the Test-taker’s answers into the computer, and typing the essay as dictated by the Test-taker. This accommodation is appropriate for those Test-takers who have documented difficulty writing or typing as a result of visual or physical impairments. That is, **a scribe is approved in situations where a Test-taker is *unable to write or type (or see to write or type) on their own, even with extra time.*** A scribe may in no way edit the essay or discuss the tests or responses with Test-takers, except in order to clarify the Test-taker’s intended response (e.g., ask the Test-taker to spell a vocabulary word).

8.7-1 Instructions for the Use of a Scribe

The use of a scribe may be approved as an accommodation for a Test-taker with a documented disability, when the Test-taker is unable to write (or see to write) themselves, even with extra time. The scribe should do the following:

- a. Enter answers to the multiple choice questions on the computer; and/or
- b. Type the essay portion of the Language Arts, Writing Test.

The scribe's duty is to faithfully enter the Test-taker's responses without correcting them. The scribe must be an accurate and fair secretary, neither diminishing the fluency of the Test-taker nor helping to improve the writing.

When a scribe is asked to type the essay portion of the Language Arts or Writing Test, Test-takers who have a disability must also have the opportunity, as other Test-takers, to plan, draft, and revise their essays. When the essay is finished, the Test-taker must read the essay and dictate revisions to the scribe. If the Test-taker who has a disability cannot read his or her essay, the scribe must read the essay aloud and allow the Test-taker to dictate revisions. The scribe may not dictate essays into a tape recorder for later transcription because this would preclude the Test-taker's opportunity to revise his or her composition. The Test-taker is ultimately responsible for the accuracy of the completed product.

8.8 Use of a Private or Distraction-reduced Testing Room

A Test-taker may request to take the GED® tests in a private or distraction-reduced room (which could include several other Test-takers and which may not be completely "private"). A private room may be necessary in cases where the Test-taker, because of their disability, poses a potential distraction to other Test-taker, such as a Test-taker with Tourette's disorder. In other cases, a Test-taker may need a private room in order to attend to medical issues or use medical devices during the GED® test. However, a private room is not always available, nor is it always warranted. If a private room is not available, it may be appropriate for Test-takers with some conditions to test in a small group, in a quiet, distraction-reduced room or other separate room designed for this purpose. In some cases, a test administrator may, at their discretion, alter the configuration of the room so as to reduce distractions even further.

In any case, the Test-taker must always be supervised by a proctor.

Test-takers with disabilities who are approved for testing in a private or distraction-reduced room must not be made to wait significantly longer to schedule and take their GED® test than non-disabled Test-takers, because of a shortage of such rooms, or for examiner convenience, or for any other reason.

8.9 Minor Modifications That Do Not Require Prior Approval

There are certain personal items that will be allowed in the testing room. The items are listed on the Personal Item Exception Form posted on the GED Testing Service website at: www.gedtesting.com/accommodations (document titled Personal Items and Minor Modifications.)

8.10 Official GED® Testing Center's Responsibilities for Accommodated Testing

8.10-1 Publicity for Accommodated Administrations

GED Administrators™ should publicize widely the availability of accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. GED Administrators™ are especially encouraged to elicit the cooperation of special education, vocational rehabilitation, and adult education agencies as part of this publicity effort. GED Administrators™ are encouraged to direct Test-takers who may have disabilities to the website, which includes request forms, documentation guidelines, and other helpful resources.